

In the Claims:

1. (Original) A process for preparing a calcined zirconia extrudate comprising the steps of:
 - a. preparing a shapable dough which comprises mixing and kneading a particulate zirconia with a solvent to obtain a mixture having a total solids content of from about 50% to about 85% by weight,
 - b. extruding the shapable dough to form a zirconia extrudate, and
 - c. drying and calcining the zirconia extrudate;

wherein the particulate zirconia comprises no more than about 15% by weight of zirconia which is other than monoclinic zirconia.

2. (Original) A process for preparing a calcined cobalt/zirconia extrudate comprising the steps of:
 - a. preparing a shapable dough which comprises mixing and kneading a particulate zirconia and a cobalt precursor with a solvent to obtain a mixture having a solids content of from about 50% to about 85% by weight,
 - b. extruding the shapable dough to form a zirconia/extrudate, and
 - c. drying and calcining the zirconia/cobalt extrudate;

wherein the particulate zirconia comprises no more than about 15% by weight of zirconia which is other than monoclinic zirconia.

3. (Original) A process according to Claim 2 wherein the cobalt precursor is selected from the group consisting of cobalt hydroxide, cobalt acetate, cobalt nitrate, cobalt oxide and mixtures thereof.

4. (Original) A process according to Claim 3 wherein the cobalt precursor is cobalt hydroxide.

5. (Original) A process according to any of Claim 1 wherein the total solids content of the shapable dough is in the range of from about 55% to about 80% by weight.

6. (Original) A process according to Claim 5 wherein the total solids content of the shapable dough is in the range of from about 65% to about 75% by weight.

7. (Original) A process according to Claim 1 wherein the particulate zirconia comprises no more than about 10% by weight of zirconia which is other than monoclinic zirconia.

Claims 8-9 (Canceled).

10. (Original) A process for preparing a calcined cobalt-impregnated zirconia extrudate which comprises the steps of:

- a. preparing a shapable dough which comprises mixing and kneading a particulate zirconia with a solvent to obtain a mixture having a total solids content of from about 50% to about 85% by weight,
- b. extruding the shapable dough to form a zirconia extrudate,
- c. impregnating the zirconia extrudate with a liquid cobalt precursor to form a cobalt-impregnated zirconia extrudate, and
- d. drying and calcining the cobalt-impregnated zirconia extrudate;

wherein the particulate zirconia comprises no more than about 15% by weight of zirconia which is other than monoclinic zirconia.

11. (Original) A process according to Claim 10 wherein the liquid cobalt precursor is an aqueous solution of a cobalt salt selected from the group consisting of cobalt nitrate, cobalt acetate, cobalt hydroxide, and mixtures thereof.

Claims 12-25 (Canceled).